

THE
Vulgar Prepossessions

In Favour of the

Bishop of BANGOR,

Candidly and Impartially

CONSIDERED.

With a particular Account of his

Lordship's Candour

Towards the

Committee and Others.

*Humbly Dedicated to The Reverend Gentle-
men of The COMMITTEE.*

*Tutatur Favor Immeritum; Lacrymaeque
Decore.*

L O N D O N: Printed by H. P. for
J. MORPHEW, near Stationers-Hall.
MDCCXVIII.

Price Six-Pence.

Advertisement

In Favour of the

TO THE

READER.

IT will be perceived, by several Passages in the following Sheets, That the Author had intended a Reply to some of his Lordship's principal Arguments, in the Close of them. But, This is for the present, omitted; the other Matters here treated of, being found to require more Enlargement than was foreseen.

The

Price Six-Pence.



IT being a prevailing Opinion;
That the Bishop of Bangor
is *wholly* UNANSWERABLE in
his late Performances, but es-
pecially in his *last*; I could
not but think that a *clear* Proof of his
Lordship's *Fallibility* might be worth At-
tempting, if there can be any hope of
success. Nor can I be *without Hope*,
That the Evidence I am able to produce,
may have its effect; at least, upon *some*
of those few, who are but *moderately*
prejudiced, and may *still* be capable of
Conviction. For * *One is naturally apt to*
think he may convince Others of what he is
perfectly satisfied about himself: And so per-
fectly am I satisfied in the present Case;
that I must think it very much my own
B Fault,

* Mr. Pillonn. 33.

Fault, if I fail of convincing a Reader who has *Common Understanding*, and an honest Disposition to be convinced *by Reason*. To such a *One*, I hope it may soon, and easily, be made appear, not barely that his Lordship is not always unanswerable; but that he is not *so*, even in those Points where it most concerns him to *be so*.

Yet, since *that* Fair and Honest Disposition to receive a Conviction, is not to be presumed upon in every Reader; it may be worth while to endeavour the removal of *those* Prejudices, of which I am most apprehensive; before we come close to the Merits of the Question. This, I imagine, is most likely to be done, by a particular Inquiry into the Rise of that *Prevailing Opinion* it is my business to oppose: Or by considering, whether there be not some *Causes* assignable, whereby the Notion that his Lordship is Unanswerable may fairly be accounted for; tho' we *should not* suppose it to be owing to the strength of his Reasonings, or the truth of his Doctrines.

That there are *such assignable Causes*, is what I hope to make very evident in the sequel; but before I proceed, I shall give the Reader an intimation of *One* Encouragement I have, to believe, that my present Undertaking will no more be Difficult,

cult, than it is Needless. *Some* of these Preliminary Matters shall be a little the more enlarged upon; because they are intended as an Introduction, not only to the *Reasonings* that will be found towards the latter part of these Papers, but to *other Pieces*, that may follow from the same Hand; unless very suddenly prevented by a better. It being my full persuasion, that there is very much more, to be most evidently proved against his Lordship, than what is here undertaken for the present: And that in my present, or future, endeavours upon this Subject, I shall not be altogether without a Helper; but shall sometimes find my self *supported*; and (in my own Opinion) by a very good Authority.

For, next to the Evidence of the Thing; the best Encouragement I have, to hope that his Lordship may not be *wholly* Unanswerable; is the Observation of some very material Points, in which his Lordship has condescended (as I imagine) to Answer Himself. This appears to me with such a degree of Evidence, that I do not find it in my power to convince my self of the contrary at present; or entirely to despair of being favoured, upon several *important* occasions, with the Advantage of his Lordship's

Assistance. I would not be understood to insinuate, that his Lordship has *openly* retracted any one Particular, that I know of : But, he *seems*, I think, (*implicitly*) to give up in one place, the same things that are strongly insisted on in another ; and thereby very much to facilitate the Work of his Opponent.

Nor am I utterly without hope of the like *Assistance*, in some degree, from other Hands ; and These not very inconsiderable in the present Debate. The Gentlemen who have *assisted* his Lordship ; do not, *all of them*, seem to have been so *narrow-spirited*, or so Partial ; as to be altogether wanting in their friendly Offices, to those who *are not* of *their own*, or his Lordship's, *Persuasion*. But have contributed (as I imagin) in some proportion, to the relief of his Lordship's Opponents ; by invalidating a Topick or two, which his Lordship seems to rely upon against them.

Here and elsewhere, I say *only*, SEEMS ; Because I know *the danger* ; and have good Reason to be aware, that I am not (too familiarly) to presume upon *Certainties*, about *Intentions* or *Meanings*. Not even about the real Drift, and Design, of *seemingly* direct Argumentations ; or the real Meaning (that is, the private Interpretation)

pretation) of *seemingly* plain Expressions, *This* I hope to remember, as a necessary Rule, in the prosecution of my Inquiries, about *the Nature of the Church, or Kingdom*, of Christ: And so much the rather; because it is a Caution which his Lordship himself has taught me. I do not mean, by *his own Example*: But his Lordship has, *otherwise*, taught me that there is a danger of my mistaking in *such matters*: And This he has taught me in such a *Manner*; that, unless I am destitute of common Sense, it may be expected I should (now at last) be convinced of a great Necessity to be very much upon my Guard. For, should I prove so Unhappy, as to commit one of *those* easy Mistakes; the Judgment is denounced: And I have a warning beforehand, that it is at the peril of a very severe *Censure* either upon my Honesty, or Understanding.

This matter I am obliged to explain, in some measure, by the Design I have professed. One part of which, is to inquire into the Causes that *may* have given Rise, or Support, to the Conceit of his Lordship's being Unanswerable. But, as I find my self, not a little concerned in the Case, being already dipt in the Guilt of mistaking his Lordship's Meanings: I shall presume upon Pardon, from a *charitable* Reader;

der ; if I am hereby tempted to expatiate upon this Point, a little farther than my principal Design may oblige me. And this the rather, because I have several other, (less interested, and *very charitable*) Considerations in my thoughts ; and am farther encouraged by These, to believe, that a Paragraph or two extraordinary, upon *his Lordship's Candour*, may not be thought a Needless, or an *Uncharitable* Excursion.

It appears to me, that the Misconstruction of his Lordship's Writings and Reasonings, as it is *represented* by himself ; may *seem* to imply something Capital, and exceedingly Heinous: More Heinous (as I apprehend) than either Charity, or his Lordship, will allow us to conceive, of an Error about the plain Meaning of Scripture it self. I speak of such an Error as (in outward appearance) is *equally* Circumstantiated : And that I may not be suspected of insinuating a Charge against his Lordship's *Representations*, without any reasonable grounds ; an Instance or two shall be immediately produced. I shall content my self with such as first occur ; tho' they should not be the most advantageous to my purpose : Being well satisfied that, if *one* of these should be contested ; another, and another, and another,

ther, will not be far to seek. The Reader may judge, by those I shall now lay before him ; What a Crime it may be thought to mistake his Lordship's *Meanings* : And by some Observations thereupon which shall be added ; he may also judge, Whether this be not such a Crime, as Humane Weakness cannot always be sure to escape : Or could not, at least, without the help of his Lordship's *Explainings*.

Ans. to Repres. 13, 14. His Lordship affirms, that the Sense he is there giving of a certain Paragraph in his Sermon, is *the Only Sense* it is capable of by *any Construction in the World*. N.B. What Sense there may be in *that* Paragraph of the *Sermon*, or in those Pages of the *Answer* which Comment upon it ; is like to be examined very soon, and pretty strictly. At present we are only to observe, that there is a *Severity* implied in the Words I have transcribed, and in another Passage I shall here annex ; and such a *Severity*, to appearance, as may seem not very consistent with his Lordship's, so much celebrated, Candour.

The other Passage is, as follows.

Ans. to Repres. p. 22. His Lordship is speaking of *the extraordinary State of the Church, in the Days of the Apostles* ;
and

and here he *thinks* he may venture to affirm, there is not a Man capable of reading his Lordship's Sermon, who can understand Him to have had the least thought in his Mind, of that State of the Church. Now for my own part, who have *actually* read the Sermon; I do really believe his Lordship had *no such* Thoughts in his Mind: And, if such a Thought had been there, I believe, that some few Words in the Sermon, might not have stood where they do; nay that some *other* short Word or two, might somewhere have been dropt in, expressly, by way of Exception to that *Extraordinary State of the Church*. I do farther believe concerning *both* the Passages I have transcribed, and many others of the same Aspect: That, Either they *Are* intended by way of Answer to the Committee, or they *Are Not*. If they *are not*; I shall be no farther troublesome: But if they *be* so intended; then, I think, they must suppose, that the Committee did misrepresent his Lordship's *Meaning* (p. 13, 14.) and his Lordship's *Thoughts*, (p. 22.) For, if They did not misrepresent his Lordship's *Meaning*, or *Thoughts*; then, his Lordship's *explaining* his own *Meaning* (p. 13, 14.) and his declaring his own *Thoughts*, (p. 22.) will be of little significance towards

wards an Answer to *the Committee*. If They *did* misrepresent either his Lordship's Meaning (13, 14.), or his Thoughts (22.) This must have been done, Either thro' *mistake*, or with *design*. Suppose, therefore, that They misrepresented his Lordship's Meaning, (13, 14.); thro' *mistake*: In this Case; it will appear that they stand charged, by his Lordship, with mistaking his Lordship's Meaning, where no Man could mistake it, who is but able to *Read*, and to understand *the Only Possible Sense* of what he Reads. And *This*; even in an *English* Sermon; and in a Writer, not a little Renowned for Clear Thought, and *Clear Expression*. If They could, and did (*really*) mistake in such a Case as this; then indeed it may be no great impropriety to say that they were not Masters of an *Ordinary Capacity*, or a *Common Understanding*.

Suppose, therefore, on the other side; That they did *Not* mistake, but did *really apprehend* his Lordship's *true* Meaning, and did *misrepresent* it nevertheless: And all this in a very Publick manner, and with an Intention that is either well known, or can easily be suspected. Upon *this* Supposition, there is enough to be said of such Misrepresenters; and his Lordship has

C

Friends

Friends (to my certain knowledge) who know how to say it pretty plainly.

Whatever his Lordship's Friends may say; there will remain, to all humane Appearance, a very ungracious *Dilemma*: Not only upon the Committee, for whom *alone* I am by no means concerned; but upon every *Living Man*, whose Misfortune it has been to *explain* his Lordship (in such delicate particulars) otherwise than his Lordship has since *explained* Himself. Be those living Men, Christians or *otherwise*, *Englishmen* or Foreigners; Tories or Whigs: Be they Clergy or Laity (for whom, in their *Personal* Capacities; I do, and hope I always shall, bear an equal Regard:) Nay, be they his Lordship's Adversaries, or his *Votaries*; his Rivals or his *Patrons*; *as far as* any of these Men may have happen'd to represent *Those* Meanings of his Lordship's, otherwise than those Meanings have been (since) represented by Himself; *so far* are they *Concluded* under that unmerciful *Dilemma* before-mentioned; And so far must they suffer accordingly, in the one part of their Character, or in the other.

I do not mean This, with Respect to those Passages *only*, which are *above* transcribed, out of the *Answer to the Committee*: For, I believe it to be evident, in fact,

fact, that his Lordship's Meaning (according to his own *Authentick* Account of it) has been misrepresented more than once, or twice ; and that *this* has been done, not only by Men of *one* Denomination : And not only in such Expressions, as his Lordship has not yet deny'd to be dubious ; but in those very Paragraphs, or Sentences, of which his Lordship has actually Pronounced, that Their Meaning could not be mistaken by a Man able to *Read* them, by a Man of *Ordinary Capacity*, by a Man of Common Understanding : or something, in other Words, to the like purpose, and amounting to no less than *these*.

If this be *so* ; there are a great many living Men who have brought themselves into a worse Condition than ever they were aware before ; and must now stand exposed to the stroke of that two-edged Sword, *The Dilemma*. Such is the Case of every Man, who has mis-explained any one of those well-asserted Meanings we are considering. Whatever he may be in other Respects ; he must take his Lot in *the Dilemma*. The want of Sense, or the want of Honesty, is the Character he may seem entitled to ; and his Lordship's Readers have the Privilege of determining (according to their different inclinations)

nations) which of the Two he shall enjoy. For my own particular ; as I find my self in the Number of the *Condemned*, I would Petition for the Punishment which is the less severe : That my Errors may be accounted for by nothing worse than the want of Sense. And, with respect to *some Others*, I do believe it not improbable, that his Lordship (for his own part) might suppose them to have some Deficiency *this way*. His Lordship's good Judgment might lead him to think, that their pretending to oppose his Lordship, in this Controversy, or to interpret his Meanings for him as they did ; might proceed from their Want of Sense, rather than from their want of *so much* Honesty, as *not* to speak what they did *not* Think. Upon the other side, his Lordship's Personal Goodness, and Charity, might incline him to let them *pass* in the *World*, for *Weak Men*, and unlearned ; rather than for malicious, and wicked. Because the Branding of them with *Weakness* or *Ignorance*, would naturally be accounted much the more *Humane*, and Merciful, way of chastising the Faults they had committed : And therefore, by this Method, his Lordship's Misrepresenters (as the Committee for Example) might still seem, in some manner, to be allowed

ed *The Benefit of the Clergy* at least. Nay they might *really* enjoy it both in Name, and in *Effect*; tho' there be a *peculiar* Circumstance Inverted: The Punishment *these* Culprits undergo, being so much the more *Moderate*; if his Lordship be understood to have pronounced that they *Can Not Read*.

But then; ev'n upon this *Supposition*, (or any other to the like Effect) there will be no great Complement implied, tho' the *Benefit* be granted. The Character of an uncommon Ignorance, or Deficiency of Sense, being seldom an acceptable Account for a Man to hear of himself. It must, however, be consider'd, in the present case, as a Favour allowed to the Condemned; the other part of the *Disjunctive*, or the Imputation of wanting *Honesty*, being a Censure so much the less *Gracious* of the Two. And it were well, if *this Favour* were *sure* to be *always* granted; for, tho' his Lordship, in his Mercy, should be supposed to *Strike* at the Understanding, and not at the Sincerity, of his Misinterpreters; yet *Others* who *Can*, and do, *Read* his Lordship's Works, may not be aware upon which side his Lordship's *Blow* is to fall; or may not be persuaded to direct *their own* the same way. *Those Others* will not easily be convinced, that his Lordship's

ship's *Misinterpreters* had either, not Learning enough to *Read*; or not Sense enough to apprehend the *Only* possible Meaning of plain *English* Words. Besides that, there are many, in this unhappy Number, who never can be generally thought to have any pretension to his Lordship's *Coup de Grace*; or to the *Benefit* of being supposed to want *English Scholarship*, or *Common Sense*.

Of *this* I am the more apprehensive, upon the account of certain *English* Words, that have escap'd his Lordship himself: Words of such a Sound; as may seem to direct the *Suspensions* of a Reader, towards the *Morals*, rather than the *Intellectuals*, of the Person Concerned. (All which, I really believe to have happen'd, without his Lordship's *Designing so much*.) An Instance to this purpose, which now offers itself to my Thoughts, is to be seen in the Answer to Dr. *Snape*, p. 22. Here the Doctor is call'd upon to *lay his hand upon his Heart*, and *ask*, whether his *Representation* of a Sentence in his Lordship's Sermon, is a *Christian, Humane, Honest Representation* of what the Doctor's own Eyes *Read* in that Sentence. After which it soon follows, That to represent his Lordship as the Doctor had *there* done, is to *resolve to represent* as the Doctor himself shall think

think fit; and then the Sentence concludes (with the constant Topick of Aggravation and Alarum, that) **POPERY** may *well Triumph*, if a Protestant may not say What his Lordship had said, *without such a TREATMENT.*

I confess that I could not, at first, Read all this without Horror; and that I am almost tempted, upon the review, to recall my suggestion of What his Lordship *did not* design. Yet still, my Resolution is, never (if I can help it) to let it rest in my Thoughts, That it was his Lordship's Meaning, to say, the Doctor had *Resolved* to represent him Unchristianly, Inhumanly, or Dishonestly; and that he had done all This, from an angry Imagination, that this was a *Treatment* his Lordship had deserv'd: And after an *Express Profession*, moreover, by the Doctor himself, that he had not *misinterpreted* his Lordship's *Meaning Wilfully*; (*First Letter*, p. 28.) it at all.

But my *Fear* is, that those Words of his Lordship's, as they stand without any hint of Caution to his Readers; may leave an abiding Impression upon many of them, to the disadvantage of the Doctor's Veracity and Justice. The Sound of *Popery*, and the Notion of wilfully *Resolving* to bestow such *Treatment*, may run in their heads;

heads: and when this Treatment is *represented* as Unchristian, Inhumane, Dishonest; a Treatment which deserves such *Epithets* from his *Lordship*, may seem to entitle the Person who has used it, to those (more familiar) Appellations, which I *care not to repeat*. Some of his Lordship's good Friends have thought themselves *Worthy* to make such Free Complements to their Superiours; and with as little Ceremony as one shall usually observe: Which these *Gentlemen* would not (all of them sure) have thought *proper*; unless they had either imagined themselves to be *taught*; or were some way encourag'd to believe, that such *Treatment* was *deserved*.

My own Humour is such, that I have little Pleasure in seeing Any One so Treated by Any One; and my Design (accordingly) is fixed, to avoid the Imitation of what I dislike: To make good, if possible, all that my Title-page pretends; and (whatever else I may fail in, still) to preserve a due regard to *Charity* as well as Truth: Neither to express, nor *imply*, any un-candid, or any needless, Surmises against the *Inward Sincerity*, or the Moral Character of Persons: And to Guard the Reader, withal, against misconstructions in that particular; as often as I am aware of the least Danger that can require it.

What-

Whatever *Defects* there may have been even, in *this* respect; on one side, or on *Both*: Even for *these*, I shall desire to find the most friendly *Interpretations*; and that my Reader too would always remember to do the same. The Defects of Caution, or of Candour, ought not, I think, to be resolved into the † want of Charity; when it is possible that they should be more favourably accounted for. But This I am determined in, that they shall always be imputed, by me; rather to Any Thing, than to the *wicked Dishonesty* of taking Refuge in * *Passion and Calumny*, on purpose to support a known *Falshood*, or give life to a desperate Cause among the *Vulgar*.

In the mean time, I shall take leave to observe; That if the failings have been on *Both* sides, it is not very Equitable that all the *Honour* should be on one side, and all the *Disgrace* on the other: That *Surface* is not quite the same thing with *Internal Reality*; and that the Bp. of B---r is not the *Only Living Man*; who has a *Right to Christian and Humane Treatment*, or to Equitable and Good-natured *Interpretations*.

D

For

† See his Lordship's Pref. to Mr. Pillonn. p. 21.

* Mr. Pillonn. p. 1.

For the First of these Remarks: I believe it may be well enough known, that the *Excess* of Candour has not, on either side, been the Fault most *Complained* of. And perhaps it may now *begin* to appear to some Readers, That there has been no great occasion to *Boast*; even on *that* side which has much abounded, both with *Boastings* and *Complaints*.

No less than *The* * *Angel-Temper* on one side, and That of *Michael's Adversary* on the other, is the State of the Matter, that has been set forth to the Publick. Sure something ought to be said; when such flaming *Representations* appear, in the face of the Sun: Since by this Account, it may seem as if *All* were Angels, who have the same Persuasions, with our *Occasional Author*; and accordingly, that *All* who *Dissent* from those Persuasions, were *somebody knows What*. Yet I shall do him the Justice to acknowledge my Opinion, That (on his own side) he had *no Other*, immediately, in his view, besides his Lordship; who has *Michael, the Archangel*, to represent him. Because he might know well enough, that *some Others* of the *Angelick* Party, but of *Inferior* Or-

* *Occasional Paper. V. 2. Num. 7. p. 1.*

Order ; have been (at least) as liberal of the *Railing Accusation*, as the *Blackest* of their Adversaries he could Confront against them, So that the Authors Designation of his Lordship (*in the Person of Michael*) is apparent enough ; but then, it may not be altogether so clear, *Who* is to be (on this *Occasion*) the Prince of the Devils. Perhaps That may be a *trifling part of the Controversy*: But whoever He be, that has this Part to sustain ; he is to be as very a Devil (to Appearance) while he is performing it ; as the Person he opposes, is (and has been) an Angel. Unless there can be any thing of This to be abated in Construing the following Words of the same Author, (and in the same Sentence :) That *One would think the famous Dispute between Michael and the Devil, were fought over again the Persons of Men.*

I am tired of these shocking Representations. Instead of Angelical and Diabolical, let us content our selves with *Candid and Un-candid*. And let us remember that it is not, properly, the Inward Temper of Men, we are to take our measures of, but their outward Behaviour ; because (I am allow'd to say, that) we do not know, and cannot (in nice Cases especially) rightly judge of the Heart. Nor yet, is

it only a Railing Accusation, expressed in the open and downright stile of *Rogue*, *Traitor*, &c. which here comes under our Consideration. None of those *Mouthy* Terms are to be heard, I suppose, from the *Principals* in the present Controversy, on either side. Or if they *were*; yet there might be something besides these, equally to be accounted of, when Candour is the Quality we are vying. Every thing which is to the same Effect, must come into the Ballance. Does Candour consist in Good Intentions, or a tender Regard, toward the *Reputations* of other Men? Is Railing Accusation criminal (in this respect) only as a Symptom of ill Intentions, or as a *means* to mischievous Effects? And is there nothing else, besides Broad *Knave* and *Villain*, &c. which may give *us* reasonable Suspicions of *such* ill Intentions; or which is *as* likely to make the Mischief succeed? Those harsh Syllables are returned back, with scorn, by the Reader; and seldom fail to leave the most of their Effects upon the Author. But when something to the like Sense, is Addressed in a *seemly* Covering, with a Modest and Unwilling Manner; by way of tender, and extorted, Complaints of hard Usage received: Here Humanity takes part with the Injured; Readers are

At-

Attracted, and Credit is gained to all, and to more than, is said. For who would imagine that so much Modesty and Meekness should have said the *Worst*?

Thus, the *Abundance* of the Author's Candour is Display'd to the World; at the same time that his Adversaries are suffering, so much the more, from the *Deficiencies* of it. It serves himself as a Covert; under which he may stand secure while he is sending his Arrows about him: So that *Thousands shall fall beside him, and ten-thousands at his Right-Hand; but it shall not come nigh him.*

The Havock he has made has no harm in it; only because there was nothing *Ungenteel* in the *Manner* of doing it: Or because the Instruments he imploy'd, were kept a little Clean, and Smooth; and thereby only so much the keener, for doing effectual Execution.

I hope it is evident, that a Real Candour is a thing very distinguishable from mere Ceremony, or Surface. And tho', when Mischief is to be done, the doing it in a *Fair*, or Specious, *Manner* may sometimes be accounted an *Obligation*; yet that Obligation may appear to be so much the less, if such an Obliging *Manner* should have a Tendency to make the Mischief the greater. At the best, I believe
that

that an External Candour can have no Claim to any greater Value, than his Lordship will allow to an, equally, external Religion.

Nor do I here, by naming his Lordship, design any, the least, Application of what I have been saying to his Lordship's *Inward* Charity, or to the real Candour of his Lordship's general Intentions. The worst *Cause*, to which I ascribe the worst Appearances, I have observ'd in his Lordship's Writings, is meerly Human Infirmary, discovering it upon *sudden* Occasions, or in *particular Circumstances*. And withal, I think it would be extremely uncandid to entertain any farther Suspicion : Tho' I cannot therefore think it the *same* (or any real) Offence, to represent his Lordship as a Writer subject to Failings; even in this point of *Candour*, wherein he is so much applauded. If *this* be not allowed, there are Multitudes (instead of one) who must suffer, as I fear, a worse Imputation than that of mere Infirmary. Men of almost all Denominations will, in their several Degrees, remain promiscuously expos'd to the same Censures ; if some of his Lordship's Assertions are to *pass* without the *Amendment* of an Explanation ; or if some of his present Explanations may not be a little farther explain'd.

In

In *their* behalf therefore, and his Lordship's; I shall here endeavour, by one short Argument, to convince the Reader, That his Lordship did not (and could not) design any of those *Affertions* for such hard Sayings, as their natural Interpretation, or apparent Consequences, may seem to make them. I have already expressed my Belief, That his Lordship did not *mean* them against the *Honesty* of his Misinterpreters: But, since there are many of his Lordship's Readers, who can conceive *Hard Thoughts*; the Argument I am now going to propose, shall be such, as (I hope) may prove, beyond denial, not only, That the *Honesty* of those Misinterpreters, was not attacked by his Lordship, but that it cannot (in this matter) be reflected on by any *Moderate*, and Reasonable *Man*.

My Argument is this: That those misrepresentations his Lordship *complains* of, cannot possibly be accounted for by the want of *Honesty* alone: For, suppose a Number of Men, who want *Honesty*, should (in consequence of *That*) set themselves to misrepresent his Lordship's *Meanings*. These *Meanings* are *so plain*, that they cannot be *really* mistaken by a Man of common Understanding: As his Lordship himself has declar'd; and as one would naturally expect, in so clear a
 Writer.

Writer. When *these* Meanings therefore, are misrepresented; but little more than common Understanding, will be required for detecting the Cheat. If this be so; then, if the Men who want Honesty, are observ'd, not only to set forth in open View; but confidently to obtrude upon Mankind such a transparent Imposture; such shameless Misrepresentations, as may be detected, and exposed, by almost every Man that has Eyes to Read: Can it possibly be imagined, That these Men should be wanting in nothing else besides Honesty; or That their Understandings should be very perfect, while they are employing themselves in no wiser a Project.

Sure, they must have a very *Ordinary Capacity* indeed, if they were at all in their Senses: Otherwise They would certainly have Chosen something else than such plain *Meanings* to misrepresent. To This I shall only add, That there may be some of those Meanings, which if they had not been *really* Mistaken, could have given those Gentlemen no occasion for Displeasure; and, consequently, no occasion for Any *Representation* at all. And will any one now believe, that his Lordship did intend any of his severe Passages, expressly, against the *Honesty* of his Misrepresenters? When it is apparent
that

that he could not be severe upon their Honesty, without being more severe upon their Understanding *Also*. This may, I hope, be a very useful Caution, both to his Lordship's Adversaries and his *Friends*: That neither of them; should misunderstand his Lordship's Intentions to be more hostile than really could be; but, especially, that they should beware of committing such Mistakes in those very Passages, where they find his Lordship complaining, so *Pathetically*, of being misunderstood

I would hope also, That since the Fault of misrepresenting his Lordship, cannot be accounted for by the want of Honesty, without implying a Great Want of Understanding *besides*; it may appear to every Body, to be but *Humane* and *Equitable*, That this Fault should be imputed to the want of Understanding *Alone*. And if Thus much be allowed; there is something more, which it may be yet harder to deny: For, since in the present Case, the Want of Honesty implies a very extraordinary Want of Sense; and since his Lordship's Principal Misrepresenters have not, in any degree, the *Priviledge* of being suspected to want Sense: It will follow, That neither the want of Sense, nor the want of Honesty, was concerned in their

E

Misre-

Misrepresentations. From which the next Consequence will be; not barely, That these Misrepresentations were *real* Mistakes; but that the Meanings *so* mistaken, were such Meanings as *could be* mistaken even by a Man of *something more than* Common Understanding.

When his Lordship, therefore, declares concerning any of those Meanings, that they could *Not* be mistaken by a Man of Common Understanding; or when he makes any other *Declaration*, importing altogether *as much*: Herein his Lordship seems to give us an Instance, (and a very proving Instance) That a Man of a *very uncommon Understanding*, may really be mistaken; at least, as to the *Simplicity and Clearness* of *those* Meanings, or of the Expressions they are couched in: Nay, that such a Man may be *thus* mistaken, even in Contradiction to that apparent Evidence of *Fact*, which has, now been exhibited to the Reader.

Simplicity and Clearness have been the noted Recommendations of his Lordship's Writings. If, therefore, his Lordship himself has actually been mistaken concerning *These*; if he has asserted those Expressions to be *Simple* and *Clear*, the Meaning of which could naturally be mistaken

staken: Then, a Candid Reader may accept what has now been laid before him, as one Evidence, That his Lordship is *not* Infallible; particularly, That he is not Infallible in his judging of the Merit of his own Works.

After so great Examples of Fallibility, I shall not be ashamed to make my own Confession of past Errours; with a Resolution to be more upon my Guard, against the like, for the future. I do therefore acknowledge, that it has sometimes been my misfortune to misapprehend his Lordship's Meaning; and *this* even in some Points, where his Lordship seems to think it could not be mistaken by a Man of Common Capacities. I not only acknowledge these Mistakes, but do likewise fully resolve, at all times, to *acknowledge* so much Ignorance or Weakness, as any Mistake of mine shall be found to imply. I mean, when so fair a Proof is offer'd, of the Ignorance or Weakness there was in it; that an Impartial, Reasonable, Man would expect I *should* be *convinced*.

Notwithstanding which, I shall (at present) venture to acknowledge, on the other side, that *such* a Conviction is not come as yet; that I do not (as yet) conceive the want either of common Ho-

neſty or common Underſtanding, to be neceſſary, in any degree, to thoſe Miſtakes I have now to account for: But am ſtrongly convinced, that a Man who wanted neither, and who had *laid his hand upon his heart*, as his Lordſhip directs; might nevertheless be ſo miſtaken: and not (thereby) deſerve any Tragical Exclamations of Inhumanity or Injuſtice. *Theſe*, I fear, may themſelves be, ſometimes, very *Hard and Unjuſt*; in Effect, tho' not in Deſign.

I farther acknowledge, that ſome of the *Meanings* his Lordſhip has lately ſhewn me, are (in whole, or in part) ſuch as I could hardly ever have apprehended, without ſo good an Aſſiſtance, to be the Meanings of ſo clear, and ſo guarded a Reaſoner: Eſpecially, after a very remarkable Preface, which there may be Occaſion to obſerve upon another Time.

I ſhall, for the preſent, take leave of this Topick, with adding one ſhort Argument farther in his Lordſhip's Behalf: To ſhew that his Lordſhip could not, explicitly and deliberately, intend his (*ſeemingly*) Hard Sayings, againſt the Honesty of his Miſreprefenters; or againſt their Underſtanding *Either*. Of This I am ſatisfied, for my own part, upon more reaſonable, and more honourable Grounds.

But,

But, as every thing has not equal weight with all Readers ; what I am now going to propose, may have the most effect upon *some* : But especially upon those, who (by their Want of *Candour*, and their unreasonable Prejudices against his Lordship) are the hardest to be, otherwise, convinced.

It has already been proved, that if his Lordship had intended those (*seemingly*) Hard Sayings against the Honesty of his Misrepresenters, or against their Understanding ; he must, either way, have intended to *represent* those Ingenious Gentlemen, as wanting Common Sense. And now I only ask, whether it can be imagined by his Lordship's Friends, or his Enemies either ; That the Want of Common Sense was a Character, his Lordship could ever *mean* to insinuate, of those very Ingenious and Learned ADVERSARIES, over whom he *was* to have the Honour of so signal a Triumph.

I find my self engaged (here and elsewhere) in his Lordship's Defence : And would hope, that *This* may be something, towards *meriting* that *Assistance* from his Lordship ; which I have a Prospect of, in my future Endeavours upon the Principal Points We are to Debate.

I now suppose it to be very Manifest, That the disparaging of his Lordship's Adversaries (either in point of Honesty, or Understanding) cannot *Reasonably* be supposed any part of his Lordship's (explicit and deliberate) Intention. Yet still my Fear is, that these Expressions of his Lordship's which seem to bear a Tendency *that way*, may too much affect *some* Readers: And, particularly, those who have not *Candour* enough to bethink themselves, What *other* Meaning his Lordship could have. Something to this purpose, I think, has been already hinted; but the Observation is here repeated with a different view: Because it may help us (in some measure) to Account for the Rise, and Prevalence, of that Vulgar Opinion I have declared against; That his Lordship, *in his present Controversy*, is a Reasoner never to be Answered.

His Lordship has frequently expressed a desire, That the Truth should be tried by Argument Alone. If by Argument *Alone*; then, I suppose, his Lordship would not have it tried by *Prejudice*, at all: And in those frequent Professions of his Lordship's to this purpose; I hope, That his Lordship has hardly an Enemy, so Un-candid as to disbelieve him. In the mean time, it is my persuasion, on the

the other side; that his Lordship's own *Genius* does (naturally, and undesigningly) lead him into peculiar Ways of *seeming* to be Unanswerable; and of preparing the *Prejudices* of his Reader for the reception of that Kind Opinion.

Every Prejudice, so far as it operates upon a Reader's Understanding; is a good Preparative to such an Opinion of the Writer. Suppose the Writer, therefore, to oblige his Reader with smooth and *civil* Words: The Reader (in Return for that Complaisance) will imagine the *Railing Accusation* to be left out by his Author, Because he has the Truth of his Cause to trust to. And then, there is almost no Thanks to him for being Unanswerable: For, who does not understand, That *Magna est Veritas*, &c. Or, That Truth is *Omnipotent* of it self, and will not be foiled?

Suppose the Civil Writer's Expressions should any way, infuse into his Readers, a strong Suspicion of his Adversary's *Honesty*. It is a Maxim as old, or older than *Tully*; That he who is to convince Others of Any Thing, must in the first place, convince them of *his own* being a Good Man, or no Deceiver. What, therefore is the poor *Adversary* to do; when the Fancy of his being a Deceiver, has

has already taken possession of *Those Others* whom he has to convince?

On the other side: Suppose, any Expression (of his Lordship's, in particular;) should make a Reader suspect that his Lordship's Adversaries have no Understanding. Sure, it will be allowed, That He is fairly Unanswerable, whom No-body is able to Answer: And who should there be Able to Answer such a Reasoner as his Lordship; if all those that have Common Sense, are (*consequently*) on his Lordship's side?

Such Conceptions as these, now mention'd, may be of great Service towards an Author's being Unanswerable. And if it be a Question, Whether there are, or are not, some Passages in his Lordship's Writings; which may insinuate something of *this Kind*: At least, into a *Man of* (no more than) *Common Understanding*: of this Question the Reader may judge, by the Sample he has already seen; and, if ever there be occasion, he shall have more than a small *Sample* for his Satisfaction. He may (possibly) be pretty well convinced already, that his Lordship's Plain Meanings are such, as can easily enough be mistaken. Now the having such Plain Meanings, which may so easily be mistaken; is What I take to be another of

of his Lordship's un-projected Advantages, towards seeming to be unanswerable. As the having (absolutely) *no Meaning*, would in my Opinion, be the shortest and surest way of all: Not only to *seem* unanswerable, or absolutely to *be* so; but even to escape the Affront of being (so much as) *Contradicted*.

If the Meanings are liable to be mistaken, the *Respondent*, who *is in* such a mistake, may fancy himself to be confusing his Lordship, while he is only engaged with a *Shadow*; and while his Lordship *himself*, instead of being vanquished by such an Encounter, has only the better Opportunity of shewing himself as a Conquerour, and *obtaining* a Triumph. For, it is an Imagination, *easy* and obvious enough, That if his Lordship's Plain and True Meaning could have afforded anything confutable; They, who had *Occasion* for something to confute, need not have been at the Trouble of mistaking it, or of contriving another Meaning out of their *own Invention*. And then, when such a Mistake is *made*, his Lordship has an uncontested Right, to declare, and ascertain, what his own Meaning was. (Which Right, it might be wished, that every Reader would, in Equity, allow to every one of his Lordship's present Correspondents.)

spondents.) When, *therefore*, his Lordship's True Meaning is thus Authentically declared; it is evident, That, by this Declaration *Alone*, his Lordship's Adversaries are *so Far* unanswerably confuted. And it is not improbable, there may be *some* Readers, who can transfer the Notion of *Unanswerability* from one Particular to all the rest; Especially, from a Point so very material as *This*, to the Great Purpose of his Lordship's Personal Defence.

Nor does it seem impossible, That his Lordship's frequent Opportunities of rectifying Misrepresentations; may help very much towards the same Purpose. Because, These may afford the Means of affecting the Readers in his Lordship's Favour; and engaging their *Good Will to the Opinion*, That all his Lordship delivers, is Unanswerable Argument. His Lordship's Opportunities of rectifying Misrepresentations, are so many Opportunities of re-iterating *those* Pathetical Complaints of the *Hard Usage* he receives from his Misrepresenters. *The same Hard Usage* which his Lordship receives with such Exemplary Meekness, such a *More-than-humane Temper*: That is, (as I should have imagined) without over-much Complaining.

My

My Reasons for imagining *so*, have been already explained, in observing the Import and Tendency of his Lordship's Complaints. In all these matters, I do most heartily acquit his Lordship of any (express and premeditated) Meanings, against the Honesty or the Understanding, either of his Adversaries or his Readers. Yet still, I can no otherwise conceive of his Lordship's Plaintive *Expressions*; but that they have a Tendency, both to create some Odd Opinion or other of his Lordship's Adversaries; and to captivate his Readers to the Notion, that Himself, and his Cause, are never to be overthrown. What may be the Influence of his Lordship's Charitable *Lamentations* over his Misrepresenters; need not sure be enlarged upon, after what has *been already* said. And, as to his Lordship's meek, and constrained, Expostulations upon the Unhear'd of Hardships, and Indignities he suffers from *their* Injustice; it is easy to apprehend, that these may be very moving to the Compassion of a Tender and Good natur'd Reader. The Case being thus represented as very Grievous, it will be natural for those, who are deeply affected with it, to make his Lordship some amends; by their more willing and easy Belief, That *Argument* cannot answer the

Man, whom *Calumny* is employed to abuse. Such Affections, and (the Consequence of them) such Imaginations; will, as naturally, communicate and diffuse themselves from one to another; and thence it may, in time, become the Popular Opinion, That he, who *Suffers* in so grievous a manner, must needs be a Sufferer for Unanswerable Truth.

Now, in order to the preventing of such dangerous Prepossessions; I would intreat the Reader, as he values the Right Use of his Understanding, always to remember those very *Needful* and Important Precepts: That he should never be prevailed upon, either to *Decline after Manner*, in perverting *Judgment*, or to *countenance* a POOR MAN in his Cause.

His Lordship has, in my Opinion, several other Advantages towards appearing Unanswerable. But, because I would now hasten to my Proof, That he is not so *in reality*; I shall add but one farther Instance: And This shall be One that is necessary to the Argument that follows.

It is his Lordship's manner to express so strong an *Assurance* of his being in the Right, as to the principal Points of his Doctrine, and the principal Arguments he uses to support them; that a Reader may be in danger of supposing his Lordship Un-

Unanswerable, Because his Lordship may seem to tell him so. Some Instances of *this Assurance* shall be produced, and considered; after a very short Account of the principal Points his Lordship has to prove.

It may be supposed that the Reader is already acquainted with the general Subject of this Controversy: And that he knows it was his Lordship's Design, in the Sermon, to represent the Nature of the Church; that is of the Universal * *Invisible Church*, as his Lordship has since explained it. Upon this Design, his Lordship begins with throwing aside the Image (as he calls it) of this *Invisible Church*: That he might shew us the Features of it, with more Exactness, in the Image of an *Invisible Kingdom*.

From the Image, or (in plainer Language) from the *Notion* of a Kingdom, and a *Kingdom not of this World*; his Lordship draws his Inferences in the Sermon. These Inferences from the *Invisible Kingdom*, are Principally against that Authority which his Lordship calls *Absolute*, in the *visible Church*: And against the use of Worldly Sanctions (that is to say,

* See p. 70, 77, &c. of the Answ. to the Report.

say, *stated* Punishments, or Rewards) in the Affairs of Conscience and Religion.

In the several Pieces, since published by his Lordship; still the same Inferences, and the same Reasonings, to support them, are generally carried on: Concerning These, we are to consider, With what Phrases of Assurance they are delivered; and whether that Assurance has any rational Foundation.

Endless would be the labour of observing *All* the Passages that might be to my purpose; in the *Answer to the Committee*, and his Lordship's other Works upon the same Subject: But the few Instances which follow may serve instead of all.

In his Lordship's *Answer* to Dr. *Snape* (p. 34, 47.), and in his *P. S.* to Dr. *Sherlock* (p. 87.), his Lordship openly expresses an Opinion, That he has made his *Matters as plain as Identical Propositions*: As plain as That the *Kingdom of Christ is the Kingdom of Christ*, or That a *Kingdom Not of this World, is Not a Kingdom Of this World*. In which Propositions, abstractly considered, I have the Honour entirely to agree with his Lordship; and if his Lordship had added, in the same direct and peremptory Terms, That a Kingdom Is a Kingdom, and a Church Is a Church; I should still have had the same

same Honour, and the same Improvement, as before. But, Whether his Lordship has actually made his own Arguments from the Nature of a Kingdom, as plain as the first of his *Indenticks* (That the Kingdom of Christ, is the Kingdom of Christ); and Whether he has offered One Word, or Syllable, towards making the rest of his Arguments as plain as the Second of his *Indenticks*: This we shall diligently examin, when we come to the proper place.

In the Sermon (p. 22.), his Lordship observes, that our Saviour left *no Commands*, for the use of Worldly Sanctions; and *No Rules against* any ones inquiry into the Truth of Christianity it self. After which Remarks, it is added (p. 23.) but, *ON THE CONTRARY, as plain a Declaration as a few Words can make, that His Kingdom, is not of this World.*

Here I suppose the Meaning to be: That his Lordship's Text contains *as plain a Declaration*, as *any small Number* of Words can contain; both against the use of those Sanctions afore-mention'd, and against all *Rules* of Restraint upon *such Inquiries*.

For, unless this be the Meaning; his Text will not be so plain a Declaration
on

on the contrary of *That*, which it is here expressly brought in to contradict.

Therefore: Either the Meaning must be, That *this* Declaration is so plain against those Restraints, and those Sanctions, his Lordship is opposing; or, I must acknowledge, for my own part, that it is (at present) impossible for me to make Sense of the Passage.

Herein I am very much confirmed, by several other Reasons I could offer; but hope that what has already been said, may be sufficient for the Readers satisfaction.

His Lordship in the same Page (23), and within a few Lines, proceeds thus: *the Question with You ought to be, Whether He (our Saviour) did not know the Nature of his own Kingdom, or Church, better than Any since his Time? Whether you can suppose, He left any such Matters to be decided against Himself, and his own Express Professions; and whether if an Angel from Heaven should give You any Account of his Kingdom, contrary to what He himself hath done, it can be of any Weight, or Authority, with Christians.*

Here, again, the Meaning seems to be *this*: That the Inferences his Lordship has made from those Express Professions, or that plain Declaration, afore-mention'd, are

are so *Infallibly True*; that if an Angel from Heaven should bring any Interpretation of *those Words*, different from *That* his Lordship has given us: Such an Angel ought to be rejected, as the Preacher of a new Gospel. My Reasons for understanding the Passage in this Sense, are These. First, because an Angel could not be supposed to tell us: *This indeed is the Meaning of your Saviour's Words*; yet you ought to believe Me rather than Him: But only to persuade us, that *we mistake* our Saviour's Meaning; and ought to interpret his Words otherwise than we now do.

On the other side; it may be consider'd, what we can *suppose* to have been *his Lordship's* Design, in this Passage. And sure, it could not be, to admonish his Audience, That they ought not to believe an Angel, in Contradiction to our Saviour, where they are infallibly sure that he *does* contradict him: But only to persuade them, that, in those Points his Lordship was asserting, they actually ought to have *such* an Assurance: *That is*; if an Angel's Interpretation of our Saviour's Words, should be contrary to his Lordship's; His Lordship's Hearers, and Readers, ought to think themselves so perfectly sure, that his Lordship is in the

G

right,

right, and the Angel in the wrong ; as to flight the Angel, and (out of their Christian Duty) to adhere to his Lordship.

Such is the Meaning of his Lordship's Expressions, as they appear to me. The Reader may try, whether he can give himself any other Rational Account of the Passage.

Page 25. He may see more of the same kind. Our Saviour (his Lordship says) *has positively warn'd Men by assuring them, &c.*

Positively warn'd them by assuring them, implies that he has *Positively assur'd them.* What is it then, of which our Saviour has Positively assur'd us, in his Lordship's Text? Thus the following Words represent it--*by assuring them that this Kingdom is his Kingdom, and that it is not of this World; and THEREFORE THAT no one of his Subjects is Law-giver and Judge over others of them, in Matters relating to Salvation, but he alone, &c.*

His Lordship's Inferences (THEREFORE) from his Text, may seem, in these Points, to have our Saviour's Express Authority; or to be (in his Lordship's Judgment) as nearly equal to the *Positive* Declarations of our Saviour himself; as if the Infallible Premises had been laid down by our Saviour, and the Infallible

hible Conclusions from them deduced by an *Apostle*. Our Saviour *has positively assured them, that this Kingdom is his Kingdom, &c.* and *Therefore* (he has positively assured them) *that No one of his Subjects is Lawgiver, &c.*

There is no other way that I know of, to interpret, or *supply*, the Sentence. And I think his Lordship has somewhere an Expression to *this Purpose*, in his *Answer to the Report*: That he *chose*, in the Sermon, to *shelter himself under our Saviour's Authority*. The Reader sees, I presume, that his Lordship did something, which may be so called; and in what manner it was done.

Under this Shelter, his Lordship seems to be infallibly sure, that his own Persuasion is not only right; but essential also to Christianity itself. Upon these Grounds he has, in my Opinion, proceeded to very great Severities; and seems to have really *Un-churched*, and *Un-christian'd* at least, as many *sincere* Christians, as the most rigid of those, whom he censures for *That very Practice*. This one would expect his Lordship should not do (as his *Holiness* himself does it not) without an Opinion of *Absolute Certainty*, to warrant it. But whether his Lordship has *really* done it, or not; whether he has really *Un-churched* and *Un-christianed*, Any Body, or No Body: This the Reader may judge, by the one Passage that follows, out of many to the like Purpose, which his Lordship's late Writings afford.

Sermon. p. 16, 17.—*The only True Account of the Church of Christ, or the Kingdom of Christ, in the Mouth of a Christian, is: That it is the*

Number of Men, whether small or great, whether dispersed or united, who truly and sincerely are Subjects to Jesus Christ ALONE, as their Law-giver and Judge, in Matters relating to the Favour of God, and their Eternal Salvation.

By being Subject to Christ Alone; his Lordship (as I imagine) can possibly mean nothing else than, the acknowledging no kind of Subjection, in those Affairs, to any other Superiours: Not, even, upon a Supposition, That Those Others have a real Authority, in such Affairs, from Christ himself. So that if a sincere, mistaken Man should pay any Obedience to that supposed Authority; tho' merely out of Obedience to Christ himself, (or, because he verily believes it is Christ's Will, that he should do so:) Yet still, the Sincerity of this Man's Heart, is not enough (in his Lordship's Account) to make him a Christian.

By the little that has now been said, out of very much that might have been, it may appear, that his Lordship delivers his Notions with a very high Degree of Assurance. This Assurance of his Lordship's, may (as I fear) infuse itself, very naturally, into a plain *English* Reader: Especially in a Cause so well Patroniz'd, so exceedingly Protestant, undertaken for the Benefit of the *Poor* Christian Laity; and therefore so very self-denying to a Christian Bishop. And more especially, in a Writer so very *Candid*, and after so solemn an Introduction about the *Misuse of Words*. For, in such a Cause, and after such a Preparation: Who would ever suspect, that such an Author, so very tender towards his Malicious Adversaries; should

should not be very careful *indeed*, of doing Justice to his Friendly Readers? Who would imagine, that he should not be extremely circumspect in *all* his own Argumentations? At least, what True Protestant would ever incline to believe, That, in arguing against *Papery*, his Lordship should assume any *Semblance of Infallibility*, where the Argument has not a real Foundation to support it? Or should allow himself to fright People into his Notions, with the Danger of being no Protestants, no Christians, if they will not Think, as he Thinks? What common Reader would imagine, That (unless his Lordship's Reasonings were infallibly right) his Lordship should not bethink himself, whether *such Alarums* may not have some Resemblance to a mere Outcry of *Humane Terror*?

That there are Prepossessions of this kind, among his Lordship's most Devoted Readers; nay, that such Prepossessions do exceedingly prevail, and abound: Is, what I believe to be no great Secret. And I do therefore believe, that if it be possible to remove and dislodge them; the doing This, will be the more useful, by how much the sooner it is done: Since there may be very great Inconvenience, in suffering any Advances towards *Infallibility*, to rest long in Possession of the most eminently Protestant Understandings.

Now if it can be evidently proved, That his Lordship's Reasonings are actually false, or groundless; even in those very Particulars, where there are the fairest Intimations of their being *Infallibly Conclusive*; where the greatest Stress is laid, or the fullest (and most peremptory)

tory) Assurance is expressed: If *This* can be done, it may *then* be expected, that a Sober Reader should be prevailed upon to suspend his Judgment about his Lordship's Infallibility in the *other* Matters; 'till these come to be examined in their Turn. And I hope it both can, and will, be proved, very evidently, and very soon, and in a short Compass; That his Lordship can, and actually does, proceed upon very odd *Mistakes*; even in his most Essential Arguments; and where he is dictating to his modest Reader, in the most assured, and peremptory, Manner.



F I N I S.

ERRATA.

Page 2. Line 21. For Unanswerable, Read Unanswerable. p. 4. l. 7. for Faciliate, r. Facilitate. p. 8. l. 8. for No such Thoughts, r. No such Thought.

u